



# CALIFORNIA WorksWell

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## People With Diabetes ... Take Action!

### Lower Your Risk of Heart Attack and Stroke

IF YOU HAVE DIABETES, take action now to lower your risk of heart attack and stroke. Ask your health care team these three life-saving questions.

- What are my diabetes ABCs?  
A1C (blood glucose average)  
Blood pressure  
Cholesterol numbers?
- What are my treatment goals?
- What do I need to do to reach and maintain my goals?

Then get started lowering your risk of heart attack and stroke for a longer, healthier life.

- Get physically active every day.
- Eat less fat and salt.
- Eat more fiber – choose whole grains, fruits, vegetables and beans.
- Stay at a healthy weight.
- Stop smoking – ask your health care team for help.
- Take medicines as prescribed.

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## Preventing Falls: Take Steps Toward a Safer Home

MORE AND MORE, people are taking charge of their lives by exercising and eating nutritious foods. Because it's natural to worry about our health, especially as we age, lifestyle changes become increasingly important. When you're 20 years old and you miss a step in your home, you may get away with nothing more than a bruised knee; when you miss that same step at age 60, it could be a very different story. In fact, health- and age-related changes are two major causes of falls in and around the home.

The National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that, among older adults, falls are a serious public health problem. In fact, one in every three persons over age 65 falls each year and 55% of all falls occur in the home. In California, approximately two people age 55 and over die and another 188 are hospitalized each day from fall-related injuries.

These statistics are so compelling that in July 2002 the California Department of Aging (CDA) launched the California Fall and Injury Prevention Public Awareness Campaign. Director Lynda Terry devoted her website message to the issues surrounding fall risks: "Every day, each of us



routinely does certain things for self-protection. Many of these actions are so routine we are almost unconscious of them. Wearing a seat belt in the car, using sunscreen before going outside, locking our doors and windows are examples of these preventive activities. We do them because we are aware of the risks associated with car accidents, skin cancer, and robbery. We hear regularly about our risk of heart disease, diabetes or stroke. But most of us are much less aware of our increased risk of falling as we age."

CDA's Senior Housing Information and Support Center was established in statute in September 2000 to "serve as a clearinghouse for information for seniors and their families" concerning home modifications and injury prevention in the home environment. We all want to live in homes that are convenient and comfortable for all our family members, regardless of age or ability. Yet the legislation establishing this program appropriately states: "Most housing was

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for your information

## Complementary Health-Care News

**>> Low vitamin-C concentration in the bloodstream may be a risk factor for stroke, especially in men with high blood pressure or who are overweight, according to a study published in *Stroke: Journal of the American Heart Association*.**

**Men in the study with blood vitamin-C levels in the lowest quarter had a 2.1 times higher risk of any type of stroke compared with men in the highest quarter. The likelihood was higher for men who also had hypertension or were overweight.**

**Men in the lowest quarter had a daily vitamin-C intake roughly equivalent to the vitamin C in half a glass of orange juice. The vitamin possibly inhibits artery clogging and lowers blood pressure.**



**>> The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has warned consumers** to stop taking the dietary-supplement/herbal products PC SPES and SPES. Both contain undeclared prescription-drug ingredients that could cause serious health effects if not taken under medical supervision. The manufacturer had recommended PC SPES for "prostate health" and SPES to enhance the immune system.

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not designed for people who are disabled, have lost strength, flexibility, or balance through aging, and who necessarily have become fearful or extremely cautious in their daily activities to avoid injury."

But does the average person spend time looking around his or her home with the goal of making it safer? Probably not. If you're like most of us, it's normal to wait until after a fall or injury happens. Ideally, we should make simple changes to our home environment now; for example, remove those piles of old magazines from your hallway and make sure those throw

rugs are wrinkle free. Download a Home Safety Checklist at:

[www.aging.ca.gov/html/programs/senior\\_housing/senior\\_housing\\_checklist.htm](http://www.aging.ca.gov/html/programs/senior_housing/senior_housing_checklist.htm) to see what simple modifications you can make to reduce your risk of injury in your home.

For more information about home modifications and injury risk reduction, call 916-445-7668 or e-mail [shisc@aging.ca.gov](mailto:shisc@aging.ca.gov).

*Article submitted by staff members of the California Department of Aging, Senior Housing Information and Support Center.*

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Ask your doctor about taking aspirin.

- Ask others to help you manage your diabetes.

You are at greater risk for diabetes if:

- You are age 45 and older
- You are overweight and are physically inactive
- You have high blood pressure
- You have a family history of diabetes

To request a free ABCs brochure call the National Diabetes Education Program at 1-800-438-5383.

To learn more about diabetes call 1-800-Diabetes or check [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org).

To learn more about the California Diabetes Control Program's statewide ABCs campaign call 916-445-8732 or check [www.dhs.ca.gov/diabetes](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/diabetes).



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